

RETSO GUIDELINES FOR LOCKDOWN AND HOLD AND SECURE

Rationale and Purpose

Students, staff and visitors in River East Transcona schools have the right to learn, work and be present in a safe and secure environment. River East Transcona School Division works in partnership with Manitoba Education, Winnipeg Police Services and the RCMP to create safe school environments. Emergency preparation and practice of emergency procedures support staff in exercising critical judgement to maximize safety for all.

Provincial Requirements

Manitoba Education requires that schools practice lockdown drills at least twice each year and at least once during each term or semester. Serious incidents including those involving school lockdown or hold and secure are reported to Manitoba Education as soon as reasonably practicable. The lockdown/hold and secure plan will be reviewed annually.

LOCKDOWN PROCEDURES

When there is a known threat or possible threat to the safety of students and staff within the building or school environment, the following procedures are to be implemented.

- a) Any staff member who receives information or has reason to believe that there is an imminent threat to the safety of the school community or work site must contact the main office **immediately**. If administration is not immediately available, an alternate staff member must activate the lockdown procedure **without delay**.
- b) An auditory announcement and/or a visual indicator should be used to notify staff and students both **inside and outside the building**. The word “**lockdown**” must be part of the announcement. Due to the stressful nature of the situation, it is recommended that a script be prepared and posted next to the auditory system or that a pre-recorded automated message be activated at this time (e.g., “Lockdown the school, lockdown the school now!”).
- c) All individuals will immediately lock down.
 - Internal spaces will be secured.
 - Students in hallways and washrooms will be collected by staff if it is safe to do so.
 - Lights must be turned off and persons seated away from windows as much as possible.

- Refrain from cell phone use; cell phones must be off or placed on “silent” and out of sight.
 - Regular routines are suspended.
 - Staff and students to remain silent.
 - Teacher to take attendance including extra students.
 - All exterior doors remain as is at the time of the lockdown.
 - Focus is on securing students and staff in classrooms or offices as quickly as possible.
- d) Call 911 and provide the following information:
- your name, the building name and full address,
 - nature of the situation/threat,
 - current location of threat maker if known,
 - stay on the line and continue to provide information as requested by the 911 operator.
- e) Notify the Administration office as soon as it is safe to do so:
- Senior administration will inform your evacuation site, neighboring schools and daycares, Maintenance and Transportation.
- f) During the lockdown:
- No individuals are to move through hallways or stand near doors.
 - Ignore all bells (including fire alarms) until the all-clear signal is given unless there is evidence of a fire.
- g) Ending the lockdown:
- Do not open doors until administration gives the all-clear signal using an agreed upon phrase (e.g., “Lockdown is now over”).
 - Develop and implement plan for debriefing staff and students.
 - A Serious Incident Report must be completed and forwarded to the superintendent/CEO as soon as reasonably possible.

HOLD AND SECURE PROCEDURES

When there is a threat to the safety of students and staff due to an emergency situation occurring outside the building the following procedures are to be implemented.

- a) Any staff member who receives information or has reason to believe that there is an imminent threat to the safety of the school community or worksite must inform the administrator **immediately**. If administration is not immediately available, an alternate staff member must activate the hold and secure procedure **without delay**.
- b) An auditory announcement and/or visual indicator should be used to notify staff and students that the building is now in **hold and secure**.
- c) All external doors will be locked and monitored by staff closest to school exits. Students outside the school building should be allowed entry.
- d) If police are unaware of the situation, call 911 and provide the following information:
 - your name, the building name and full address,
 - nature of the situation/threat,
 - stay on the line and continue to provide information as requested by the 911 operator.
- e) Notify the Administration office.
 - Senior administration will inform neighboring schools and daycares, Maintenance and Transportation
- f) During hold and secure, classes may continue to function normally. Blinds should be closed and/or windows covered as much as possible.
- g) Do not unlock external doors until administration gives the all-clear signal.
- h) A Serious Incident Report will be completed and forwarded to the superintendent/CEO.

PREPAREDNESS FOR LOCKDOWN/HOLD AND SECURE

When developing your school lockdown/hold and secure plans, consider the following:

- a) PA or Alternate Auditory Announcement System:

Areas in the building that might not hear the lockdown or hold and secure command (e.g., gym, music room, industrial arts) must be identified and an alternate plan developed for notification. This must NOT include anyone walking through hallways during a lockdown.

b) Classroom or Office Doors:

If classroom or office doors can only be locked by a key, the door handle should always be left in a locked position. If classroom or office doors cannot be locked, a plan for barricading the door must be developed.

c) Washrooms:

If it is safe to do so, staff nearest washrooms should collect students and bring them into the nearest classroom during a lockdown. This should occur with students at all levels. Individuals who are caught in washrooms should enter a stall, lock it, climb on top of the toilet and stay absolutely silent to make the washroom appear vacant.

d) Open Areas:

Staff and students located in open areas during a lockdown should either make their way to the nearest classroom or office or exit the building if this is the closest proximity option. If neither option is available, staff and students should seek shelter behind or under a solid object, remaining as out of sight and close to the ground as possible.

e) Students with Special Needs:

Consideration of students with special needs during lockdown, hold and secure or evacuation must be included in the school's emergency plan.

f) Keys to Exterior Doors:

In the event of a hold and secure incident, it is critical that staff assigned to lock and monitor the external doors have ready access to the door keys. If assigned staff are not available, all staff must be aware of the procedure and location of the keys.

g) Evacuation Site for Students and Staff Outside the Building:

An evacuation site should be identified for those students and staff who are caught outside the building or are locked out of a secure area during a lockdown. Staff and students must be trained in what to do if they arrive at the building and discover it is in lockdown (proceed to evacuation site, sign in, remain there until directed otherwise by administration or police).

Note that neighboring schools might not be the best evacuation locations as they may go into hold and secure once they are notified of an incident at a nearby school. The evacuation site must be large enough to accommodate all students and staff and be immediately accessible in the case of severe weather conditions.

h) Parent and Guardians:

A designated parent location should be identified where parents/guardians will gather during a lockdown for information from school communication personnel and police. Parents should be informed of this location and the school evacuation site at the beginning of each school year in an annual letter outlining school safety procedures including lockdown and hold and secure practices. Following a school lockdown or hold and secure response, the administrator, superintendent/CEO or designate and senior communications coordinator will work together to draft a letter to parents. The designated parent location should be separate from the media location.

i) In-School Child Care Programs:

Staff and students of in-school child care programs should be fully informed and trained in school lockdown/hold and secure procedures. They should also participate in the school practice drills.

j) School Buses:

Diversion of buses on route to the school should be part of your planning.

k) Substitute Teachers:

Substitute teachers should be provided with all emergency information including lockdown/hold and secure procedures upon arrival at the school. Keys to the classroom should also be provided in the event of a school lockdown.

l) Volunteers and all others in the Building:

School volunteers and all others in the building should be provided with emergency information including lockdown/hold and secure procedures. Everyone in the building is expected to adhere to these procedures.

m) Prolonged Lockdown Periods:

While most lockdowns are over in a very short period of time, there may be occasions when the lockdown period could last several hours. Having provisions for washroom requirements such as a pail and privacy sheet would support students and adults to remain in the secure areas for as long as necessary.

n) Police Role:

In the event of an actual incident (not a drill) the police are responsible for managing the threat and for the subsequent criminal investigation. Upon arrival at the school, their primary focus is to stop/apprehend the threat maker. Police will work closely with school administration and other emergency services during and after the incident.

o) Emergency Package:

When called to a critical incident, police will require access to the following:

- names and cell phone numbers of administration,
- internal master keys to allow police access to classrooms and other interior spaces,
- floor plans of all of the buildings including portables,
- identification of off-site evacuation locations.

p) Media:

In the event of a lockdown or hold and secure response, all calls from the media should be directed to the superintendent/CEO unless informed otherwise. A designated location away from the building where media can be directed to obtain information from a divisional contact person is also helpful. The designated media location should be separate from the parent location.

PRACTICE DRILLS

Conducting practice drills is an important part of emergency preparedness in buildings and is required by provincial legislation. Police and other emergency personnel should be invited to participate in practice drills.

- Everyone in the building including students with special needs will participate in the drill.
- Pre-teaching/training will occur prior to the drill.
- Due to the stressful nature of an actual lockdown or hold and secure situation, it is recommended that staff, students, parents, neighboring schools and police be informed in advance that a drill will be held for training purposes.
- A minimum of two lockdown and one hold and secure drill will be practiced each school year.
- Drills should take no more than 30 minutes on average.
- Practice will include times outside of regular classes during unstructured situations such as lunch or recess and other times during the school day.
- A short debriefing with staff should occur to gather information for improving the lockdown plan.
- A report on the date and time of the drill as well as significant comments will be sent to the Administration Office.